

DAVID WALKER, VETERAN NASA ASTRONAUT, DIES APRIL 23

David Mathieson Walker (Capt., USN, Ret.), veteran of four space shuttle missions including flights that rescued and deployed satellites, died April 23 following a sudden and brief illness. He was 56 years old.

Walker was selected by NASA in January 1978 and became an astronaut in August 1979. During his four missions he logged more than 700 hours in space.

"The NASA community has lost a great friend and an admired colleague," said Johnson Space Center Director (Acting) Roy S. Estess. "Highly and deservedly decorated for his many achievements both as a Navy captain and as a NASA astronaut, Captain Walker served his country with distinction. His successful shuttle missions were indispensable in helping NASA further the exploration of space and enhance life on Earth."

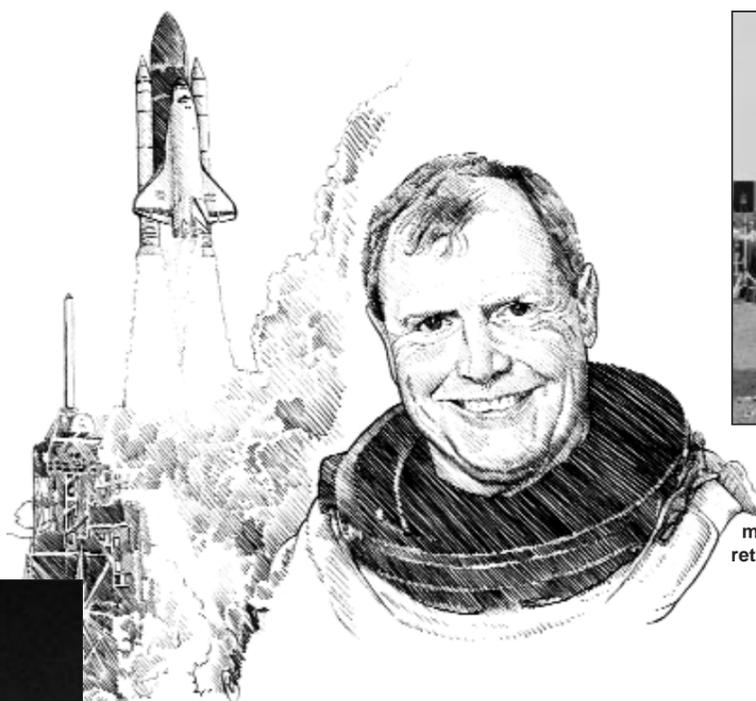
To honor his memory, a tree-planting ceremony was held at JSC on Friday, April 27. The event included his family and friends sharing light-hearted memories of Walker.

Walker first served as pilot on STS 51-A, the second flight of the Space Shuttle *Discovery*, in November 1984. During the nearly eight-day flight, the crew deployed two communications satellites and conducted the first space salvage mission in history, retrieving two inoperable communications satellites for



David Walker

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STS 51-A STS-30 STS-53 STS-69

return to Earth.

In his first space flight as a shuttle commander, *Atlantis*' STS-30 mission in May 1989, Walker and his crew successfully deployed the Magellan spacecraft, the first planetary probe to be released from the space shuttle. Magellan arrived at Venus in August 1990 and mapped 95 percent of the surface of the planet. Crewmembers also worked on secondary payloads involving fluid research and chemistry during the four-day mission.

Walker next commanded a five-member crew on STS-53 in December 1992 aboard *Discovery*. His crew deployed a

classified Department of Defense payload and performed experiments during its seven-day mission.

Walker flew his final mission as a shuttle commander in September 1995. The STS-69 crew deployed and retrieved two payloads during the nearly 11-day flight aboard *Endeavour*. The Wake Shield Facility, a saucer-shaped satellite that flew free of the shuttle for several days, was deployed to grow thin films in the near perfect vacuum created by the wake of the satellite as it moved through space. The other payload, the Spartan-201 astronomy satellite, helped researchers study the outer atmosphere of the Sun and its transition into the solar wind that constantly flows past the Earth. Crew-members also performed a six-hour



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A memorial service was held at JSC on April 27 to remember veteran Astronaut David Walker, who recently passed away. A tree was planted in his memory. Walker flew on four Shuttle missions, and retired from NASA in 1996.

space walk to test assembly techniques for the International Space Station.

Walker retired from NASA in April 1996. Until his illness, he served as the president of the Idaho Aviation Foundation, a non-profit corporation promoting general aviation in the state of Idaho.

Walker's honors and awards included the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the National Intelligence Medal of Achievement, the Legion of Merit, two Defense Meritorious Service Medals, six Navy Air Medals, the Battle Efficiency Ribbon, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, two NASA Distinguished Service Medals, the NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal, four NASA Space Flight Medals, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, the Vietnam Service Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Survivors include his wife, Paige, and two children, Michael and Mathieson. Interment will take place this month at Arlington National Cemetery. ■

In-search-OF

Due to the overwhelming response we received for our Mother's Day article, the Roundup is now requesting information for a Father's Day article. Do you know of any fathers who work, or have worked, with their children here at JSC? Tell us about them! Send your story idea information to Julie Burt, Roundup Assistant Editor, at julie.v.burt1@jsc.nasa.gov, or give her a call at (281) 483-8614. The submission deadline is May 23. We regret we cannot use every story idea submitted.

CHRIS KRAFT BOOKSIGNING



Chris Kraft Jr., NASA's first Flight Director, recently signed copies of his book *Flight: My Life in Mission Control* in Building 3. Dr. Kraft served as Flight Director for all the Mercury missions and many of the Gemini missions, and he was the director of JSC from January 1972 to August 1982. Many honors and awards have come to him from aeronautical research societies and universities. Sitting with Kraft is Mary O'Connell of the Exchange Operations office.



Expedition 1 Training Lead Dolores Rader and Houston Support Group-Moscow Lead Sean Fuller received the joint honor of hanging the Expedition 1 mission plaque in the Blue Flight Control Room in Building 30 from Expedition 1 Flight Directors Andy Algate and Jeff Hanley. The official plaque hanging is done after every mission. More information can be found at <http://flightops.jsc.nasa.gov/fltdir/fdhome/fdhist/plaque.html>